

ADDENDUM TO LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Jacks Field, Takeley

PLANNING

Prepared on behalf of

WESTON HOMES

Ref: 3239-APA-ZZ-00-RE-L-9000-P01

Date: October 2023



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JACKS FIELD, TAKELEY

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APPENDICES (at rear of document):

| Appendix A: | 3239-AS-01 Extract of CPRE Dark Skies Map; |
|-------------|--|
| | 3239-AS-02 Night-Time Assessment Plan; |
| | 3239-AS-03 Representative Photograph Location Plan |

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Addendum has been commissioned by Weston Homes and prepared by Landscape Architects, Allen Pyke Associates Ltd., specialists in assessing the landscape and visual effects of proposed development.
- 1.2. It is to be read alongside the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA ref 2591-RE-07 rev P3) which accompanied a submission for the proposed development at Jacks, Takeley, described as the 'Erection of 40no. dwellings, including open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure.'
- 1.3. The proposals were submitted directly to the Planning Inspectorate under Section 62a. They were refused planning on the 9th August 2023 (ref S62A/2023/00/16). The reasons for refusal are quoted below with those elements relevant to this Addendum underlined.
 - 'It has not been adequately demonstrated that lighting and loss of vegetation, particularly in relation to access works and off-site proposals to improve the restricted byway Takeley 48/25 would not result in unacceptable <u>harm to the established character and appearance</u> of the surrounding area and to the significance of Smiths Green Lane (Warish Hall Road), a protected lane and non-designated heritage asset. This is contrary to policies S7, ENV9 and GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan and paragraphs 130 c), 185 c) and 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework'.
 - 2) 'It has not been adequately demonstrated that safe and suitable access to and from the site for pedestrians and cyclists could be achieved which meets highway design standards whilst <u>responding to local character</u> and biodiversity considerations, contrary to Uttlesford Local Plan policy GEN1 and paragraphs 92, 110 and 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework'.
- 1.4. Details have been prepared by others in response to highways, lighting, arboricultural and heritage matters referred to in the Refusal Notice. These include:
 - Jacks Lane, S38 Takeley Footpath Outdoor Lighting Report and relevant Data Sheets (MMA Consultancy, 15th September 2023);
 - Jacks Lane, S38 Takeley Lighting Impact Assessment (MMA Consultancy, 6th September 2023);

- Jacks Green Junction Works (Weston Homes,
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Barton Hyett Associates, October 2023);
- Heritage Note (RPS October 2023).
- 1.5. The submitted LVIA provided the following advice in relation to anticipated night-time effects:

'The addition of conventional street lighting in this area would have a limited effect at night due to the existing lighting in place throughout the adjacent existing residential and employment areas. The impact of lighting can be reduced through the specification of fittings which avoid light spillage or glare and, as a consequence, should not have any harmful effects on the adjacent countryside and residential areas. These measures can be addressed with the clearance of conditions through detailed design and specification'.

1.6. The LVIA Addendum seeks, at this stage, to provide an informed assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development (including the indirect effects caused by the proposed highways works) on the night-time character of the Site and its setting.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

2.1. The submitted LVIA considers planning policy at a national to local level where relevant to Landscape and Visual Effects associated with the development. Policy relevant to night-time character is briefly discussed below.

National Planning Policy

- 2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in September 2023. It references night-time effects at the following paragraphs:
- 2.3. Paragraph 174 requires that 'planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment'. Whilst this section of the NPPF does not specifically reference lighting or night-time effects this is inferred at the following requirements:

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans;...'

2.4. Paragraph 185 requires that development is appropriate to its location and takes account of 'the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. It specifically refers to night-time effects stating that development proposals should:

c) 'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.5. At the time of writing the Addendum the Uttlesford Local Plan (2005) remains the adopted development plan for the district.
- 2.6. Policies GEN2 (Design); ENV8 (Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation); ENV9 (Historic Landscapes); S7 (The Countryside) are all relevant to (and discussed within) the LVIA and subsequentially the consideration of night-time effects.
- 2.7. In addition, Policy GEN4 (Good Neighbourliness) makes reference to night-time effects within its subtext at para 3.15 as follows:

'Light Pollution - There is a potential conflict between keeping lighting to a minimum as part of protecting the character of the countryside, maintaining the visibility of the night sky, and security and safety objectives. Lighting can also extend the opportunity for outdoor sport activities in the winter months when there is limited daylight. This conflict can be resolved to some extent by careful specification and the use of the best available technology where the cost is proportionate to the benefit, but there may be circumstances where, for example, the importance of facilities to sport development is judged to outweigh the effect on the countryside.'

2.8. Policy GEN5 (Light Pollution) takes this further as follows:

'Development that includes a lighting scheme will not be permitted unless: a) The level of lighting and its period of use is the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose, and b) Glare and light spillage from the site is minimised.'

Neighbourhood Planning Policy

2.9. The Parish of Takeley was designated as the Takeley Neighbourhood Plan Area on 29 September 2021. The Neighbourhood Plan is being currently compiled by local residents and Takeley Parish Council. It will establish a vision for the evolution and long-term sustainability of the parish and will set out a vision for the future of the area and planning policies which will be used to determine planning applications locally.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1. The Addendum provides an assessment which considers best practice and terminologies as set out in:
 - 'Guidance Note 1 for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light', 2021 published by the Institute of Lighting Professionals;
 - 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Third Edition', 2013 (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and IEMA.
 - 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals Appendix 5, Night Time Photography'
 2019, published as a Technical Guidance Note (TGN06/19) by the Landscape Institute
- 3.2. The ILP Guidance Note provides the following definitions of obtrusive lighting which are referred to in the narrative which follows:
 - **Obtrusive light**: a form of pollution which keeps you awake through a bedroom window, impedes your view of the night sky or adversely affects the performance of an adjacent lighting installation, is a form of pollution.
 - **Sky glow:** the brightening of the night sky;
 - Glare: the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a darker background;
 - Light spill or Light Intrusion: the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the area being lit.





3.3. Table 2 of the ILP Guidance Note lists the recommended environmental zones for exterior lighting control:

| Zone | Surrounding | Lighting environment | Examples |
|------|-------------|--|--|
| EO | Protected | Dark (SQM 20.5+) | Astronomical Observable dark skies, UNESCO starlight reserves, IDA dark sky places |
| E1 | Natural | Dark (SQM 20 to 20.5) | Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc. |
| E2 | Rural | Low district brightness (SQM ~15 to 20) | Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations |
| E3 | Suburban | Medium district brightness | Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations |
| E4 | Urban | High district brightness | Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity |

3.4. GLVIA3 requires that professional judgements are "reasonable and based on clear and transparent methods" and that "in carrying out an LVIA the landscape professional must always take an independent stance, and fully and transparently address both the negative and positive effects of a scheme in a way that is accessible and reliable for all parties concerned".

Site Survey and Limitations

- 3.5. A site visit was carried out on the 27th September 2023 (late summer) to inform the baseline and to gain an understanding of the night time characteristics associated with the Site and its setting.
- 3.6. The assessor arrived on site at 6pm and took the time to watch the site, and its setting, change as the sun set (at approximately 6:45pm). Conditions were clear with no restrictions to visibility noted other than those associated with late summer when the trees are in full leaf.
- 3.7. Photography was taken from 7:30pm until 9:30pm. A delayed exposure was used, as necessary, to ensure that photography would be useful in explaining the light sources visible in the views. The moon was full but predominantly not visible due to a mostly cloudy night. Wind speeds were high. This allowed for occasional breaks in the cloud. Where possible a tripod was used to reduce blur, however uneven ground and high wind levels affected the tripod stability in occasional instances.

- 3.8. Overall, the assessor was able to obtain a thorough understanding of the night-time character and a selection of photographs were obtained which accurately represent the night-time features experienced on site.
- 3.9. The reader should note that, as it is not possible to access private dwellings and not all land uses may be fully operational (and lit) on the date of survey, the Addendum presents an overview of the existing night-time character and the anticipated night-time effects.

4. ASSESSMENT OF BASELINE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) have produced 'an interactive map which shows how light pollution is spilling up into the night sky around the country and where the darkest skies are'.
- 4.2. The map has been referred to in order to understand the Site (and its setting) and to identify any locations of likely sensitive night landscapes (e.g. dark-sky areas, existing light pollution, 'remote' policies) as recommended by Appendix 5 of the LI TGN06/19.
- 4.3. Figure 1 (3239-AS-01 at Appendix A) demonstrates that the Site is located within an area which is substantially affected by night light associated with the built-up areas of Bishops Stortford. This extends to include Takeley and Little Canfield, the latter being of higher night light value.
- 4.4. Stansted Airport makes a substantial contribution to night light in the wider area being of a similar level brightness to the centre of Chelmsford.
- 4.5. Night light is reduced within the rural landscape between the settlements, with the nearest dark skies being at Tilty and Barrington Hall, over 2km to the north and south respectively.



Figure 1 (also at Appendix A) showing the Site in the context of CPRE Darks Skies Map.

- 4.6. It can be concluded that any relative darkness is experienced locally and is always affected, or in some cases amplified, by the sky glow and intrusion from the night lights associated with the nearby land uses. This demonstrates that the most notable night-time effects will be on residents overlooking the site and walkers and motorists moving through the area between the different land uses.
- 4.7. The night-time assessment focusses on these immediate views and the value placed on night-time features which are experienced by the receptors.
- 4.8. Figure 2 identifies the key features / characteristics. It is based on the night-time survey and is included at Appendix A. It should be read alongside the representative views and descriptions which follow, their locations are included on Figure 3 at Appendix A.

Representative Views

- 4.9. Representative night-time views are grouped to describe key areas and characteristics, starting at the site and moving further afield.
- 4.10. Views 1 to 4 are representative of the night-time character of the site itself.





View 1







- 4.11. View 1 looks into the Site from the proposed vehicular access (an existing field access). Skyglow associated with Little Canfield is visible beyond the dark field. Vegetation along the site boundaries obstructs / filters views to properties at Jack's Lane.
- 4.12. Lighting at Maggotts Cottages in Views 2, 3, 4 and 5 highlights the darkness of PROW 48/25 and Smiths Green as they pass the site. The lighting and sky glow at Stansted airport is visible in View 3 with the red light of the mast at Fanns Wood visible beyond the A120. The A120 is in cutting and lighting associated with its traffic is not visible.

4.13. Views 5 to 8 are taken along Jack's Lane near the Site's northern boundary.





View 5

View 6



View 7

- 4.14. With the exception of one heritage street lamp (which was only on intermittently when on site), there is no street lighting along Jack's lane. Each individual property fronting onto the lane has its only amenity and security lighting which, in some situations, presents light intrusion in the form of glare and light spill for walkers using the lane.
- 4.15. Vegetation along the Site's northern boundary restricts light spill into the site and beyond to Smiths Green. The lack of footway and pockets of darkness along the route make this lane feel unsafe to walk without a torch. Its night-time character is mostly valued by the residents which front onto the lane.
- 4.16. View 6 is taken at the point where PROW 48/25 joins the lane. The by-way is dark and lighting at The Maples accentuates the darkness of the route beyond the bollards. Again a torch would be needed to walk the PROW as it passes the Site and connects to Little Canfield.





View 10

- 4.17. Views 9 and 10 are taken near the junction of PROW 48/25 and Burgattes Road. Street lighting substantially changes this night-time character, although it does present an environment which is safe to walk or use a pushchair or wheelchair after dark.
- 4.18. PROW 48/25 is not lit and notably dark to the right of the streetlight in view 9.
- 4.19. The night-time character of Smiths Green at its southern end is substantially different to that described above and is explored in views 11 to 14 below.



View 11



View 12



View 13

View 14

- 4.20. View 11 presents a typical view of the darkest section of Smiths Green where the wide grass verges, lack of street lighting and setback of individual properties presents a unique dark environment which is enjoyed by local walkers and residents fronting onto the grass verges.
- 4.21. Sky glow is still visible beyond the vegetation which forms the lane's setting, however there is limited light intrusion which detracts from the sense of place. There is no footway to the lane, however runners and dog walkers were noted using the lane and enjoying its unique night-time character in the context of the wider setting.
- 4.22. The amenity lighting of properties adds visual interest and contributes to the sense of place especially as the verge width narrows down to the junction with Jack's Lane where lighting at The Limes (view 13) highlights a junction in the road. The red light at Fann Wood Tower is visible in this view and contributes to night-time legibility.
- 4.23. View 14 looks back towards the Jack's Lane junction outside Hollow Elm Cottage where the darkness levels are increased by minimal amenity lighting and mature vegetation either side of the road.
- 4.24. Views 15 to 18 (overleaf) are taken from the northern section of Smiths Green between Maggots Cottages and the A120 corridor.

Allen Pyke Associates



View 15



View 17

View 18

- 4.25. When no cars are using the lane it is notably dark at the northern end, between Maggots Cottages and the A120 road bridge. View 15 is taken outside Warrish Cottages. Lighting in the upstairs windows is possible in the right of the view. There are limited other light sources in the view although the sky glow associated with Bishops Stortford is capture by the delayed exposure.
- 4.26. The A120 road corridor is in cutting and is unlit. The lighting from vehicles is only visible from the road bridge. Lighting and skyglow at the airport is visible in the background.
- In views from Smiths Green, north of Maggots Cottages, looking west, the skyglow and lighting of 4.27. the airport is visible beyond the roadside vegetation (view 17).
- Looking east towards Little Canfield the lighting at Parkers Farm is visible in the left of view 18. 4.28. Vegetation along the settlement boundary obstruct views towards the built-up area, however the skyglow of Little Canfield is clearly visible.

4.29. Views 19 to 21 are taken from the built-up area of Little Canfield.





View 19

View 20



View 21

View 22

- 4.30. View 19 demonstrates how the combination of street lighting and trees presents an attractive night-time setting for residents within this more densely developed area. Pavements are set back from the road by planting and are well lit. Runners and dog-walkers were noted enjoying the night-time sub-urban setting.
- 4.31. View 20 is taken from outside Takeley Primary school looking towards the Local Centre and demonstrates how road crossings and security lighting can very quickly change the character when moving through the new neighbourhood.
- 4.32. Views 21 and 22 demonstrate how the character of the B1256 varies on the approach to Takeley to the west.

- 4.33. Views 23 to 26 are taken from Takeley and demonstrate a range of night-time characters across the built-up area.
- 4.34. View 23 shows a well-lit junction at the entrance to the settlement, whilst view 24 demonstrate lack of street lighting moving into the established neighbourhood. Skyglow from the airport is visible on the skyline.
- 4.35. Within the quieter residential streets, dated streetlights present an orange glow to the neighbourhood (for example at North Road in view 25). In contrast, the office park development at Weston Group Business Centre (View 26) presents a modern glassy development with lighting accentuating the landscape and architectural form associated with the land use. Diversions on the day of the site visit did not allow travel further north to the airport along Parsonage Road.





View 23

View 24



View 25

View 26

- 4.36. Views 27 to 30 are taken from the rural landscape to the north and east of the built up areas.
- 4.37. Views 27 and 28 demonstrate that, whilst the immediate landscape is dark as expected in the rural setting, the distant skyglow of the airport and Bishops Stortford is prominent and distinctive and reduces the access to dark skies.



View 27

View 28



View 29

- 4.38. View 29 is taken from the A120 road bridge near Frogs Hall Farm. The A-road remains in cutting and un-lit. Lights from moving vehicles are only visible when crossing the road bridge. The noise of the A120 is more of a detractor in the night scape.
- 4.39. Generally, across the rural landscape, light sources are mostly from individual farmsteads or land uses fronting onto the road. Their entrance signage lighting detracts from the dark night-time character (eg View 30 at the Lion and Lamb Pub).

5. SCHEME PROPOSALS

- 5.1. The scheme proposals, as described in the submitted LVIA, have previously evolved through extensive consultation with the local planning authority and a design review panel to ensure an appropriate built form is proposed in the context of the existing settlement boundaries and patterns.
- 5.2. There will be no street lighting within the new residential area. The only proposed lighting, beyond the internal domestic lighting, will be to PROW 48/25 to enhance the connections to the Local Centre within Little Canfield. Lighting fixtures along the PROW have been selected to negate the need for removal of vegetation along the route and to avoid light spill and associated environmental effects. The MMA Lighting Impact Assessment provides more detail on this.
- 5.3. Vehicular access will be from Smiths Green at the existing gap in the boundary hedgerow so as to minimise the removal of vegetation. A localised widening of the gap to facilitate visibility splays will be accommodated, however this will be strimming back and there will be no significant loss of hedgerow to facilitate the access.
- 5.4. As explained in the submitted LVIA, during construction there will be a limited amount of tree and hedgerow clearance as indicated on the Barton Hyett Associates Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) of October 2023. A total of 3 trees will be removed from the site boundaries to facilitate the new development. This includes 2 of moderate arboricultural condition and 1 of low condition. Localised areas of vegetation clearance will be necessary to facilitate the vehicular and pedestrian accesses and to accommodate the new buildings in the southern corner.
- 5.5. Internal lighting to the buildings' habitable rooms will be contained within the maximum two storey elements. Single storey dwellings will be focussed to the southern edge in response to the existing night-time character and built form at Jack's Lane.

6. ANTICIPATED EFFECTS ON NIGHT-TIME CHARACTER

- 6.1. The baseline assessment demonstrates that the site and its immediate setting associated with Smiths Green and Jacks Lane does present a uniquely dark setting in the context of the built-up areas of Little Canfield, Takeley and Stansted Airport.
- 6.2. This is reinforced by the lack of street lighting and the low density of dwellings, especially where set back from Smiths Green behind established vegetation and the wide grass verges. These dark characteristics are experienced locally by residents at home and walking at night.
- 6.3. The features which mostly contribute positively to the night-time character include the dark lanes and the mature areas of woodland, however, these features are mostly enjoyed in the context of the following features which (subjectively) add or detract from the night-time character:
 - Individual homesteads along Smiths Green provide visual interest with their architectural frontages lit for visual amenity. The varied setbacks are accentuated by each individual homestead's lighting features. The most notable areas of darkness are at the wider areas of setback (the southern end of Smiths Green) and north of Maggotts Cottages;
 - Jacks Lane has limited street lighting. Security lighting and external lighting of residents fronting onto the lane present some light intrusion for walkers;
 - The darkness of Priors Wood is accentuated by the skyglow of Stansted and Takeley beyond;
 - The lights of planes arriving at the airport and the red lights associated with control masts and towers are a unique feature of the area and assist in wayfinding when walking or driving the dark lanes of the rural landscape north of the Site;
 - Vegetation to the site's boundaries restricts light spill into the Site from the adjoining land uses;
 - The recent residential areas of Little Canfield are successfully lit to enhance the night-time amenity value and to offer safe routes for night-time walkers and runners to enjoy;
 - Older residential areas at Takeley (such as North Road) rely on the lighting associated with the housing fronting onto the public realm, this includes occasional security lighting and out of date luminaries which do present some light intrusion for walkers;

- Walkers or runners using Smiths Green and the restricted byway Takeley 48/25 would require a torch to safely enjoy the route on a dark night. This would detract from their night-time experience.
- 6.4. The proposals will see the majority of the Site's vegetation retained and will restrict lighting to the private lighting of individual dwellings and the restricted byway Takeley 48/25.
- 6.5. The mature vegetation along restricted byway 48/25 and the specification of the lighting fixtures proposed will reduce any light intrusion or spill to adjoining areas but will enhance the experience for night-time walkers by offering a safe and sensitively lit route.
- 6.6. A limited amount of vegetation will be removed at the Site's vehicular entrance onto Smiths Green. The increase in night-time traffic accessing the Site and the additional residential properties individual lit within the Site will only be visible for walkers and motorists as they pass the entrance and for residents at Maggots Cottages who overlook the Site. The latter has already substantially lit their own curtilage to offer night-time amenity and security and therefore their experience of any darkness is already affected by their own domestic lighting.
- 6.7. The only notable night-time effects will be localised and, due to the retention of mature boundary vegetation and the lack of street lighting the proposed, the development will be in keeping with the existing night-time character associated with Jack's Lane. Appropriate lighting along PROW 48/25 will remove the need for residents to install security lighting along their boundaries and will provide an appropriate and safe link to the adjacent Little Canfield built up area, where the change in night-time character offers further amenity opportunities for night-time activities.
- 6.8. The majority of Smiths Green (the lane) will be unaffected by the lighting of the new development. There will be an inevitable increase in night-time activity, however it will be appropriate to its setting and can be readily assimilated into the existing night-time character. Existing night-time features listed above will not be affected and the sections of the lane with the most unique nighttime character (as identified at views 11, 12, 15 and 17) will not be notable affected by the scheme proposals.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. At a national scale the site (and its setting) does not fall within a designated landscape and is not protected for its dark skies according to the CPRE Dark Skies map, which demonstrates that skyglow associated with the airport and the built-up areas of Bishops Stortford reduce any dark skies in the area. Any night-time effects will be localised.
- 7.2. The distinctive night-time characteristics of Smiths Green will not be notably affected and existing residents and walkers who currently enjoy the unique sense of darkness in this location will continue to benefit from this local characteristic.
- 7.3. The lighting of PROW 48/25 will offer opportunities for increased enjoyment of the varied nighttime character of the area and will improve the after dark amenity opportunities for existing and future residents.
- 7.4. The Lighting Strategy ensures that the level of lighting and its period of use is the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose and that glare and light spillage from the site is minimised through retention of the boundary vegetation. The proposals limit any impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity. There will be no effects on any intrinsically dark landscapes in the wider area.
- 7.5. It can be concluded that the scheme proposals will comply with relevant planning policy from a National to Local Scale.

APPENDIX A







